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# ACTION IS ...

- Food for the hungry
- Shelter for the homeless
- Help for the infirm
- Care for the needy
- Companionship for the handicapped
- A helping hand in time of need
- Limited financial assistance for new projects
- Volunteer resources to communities
- Vast technical assistance
- A challenge to youth
- An outlet for seniors
- A chance to serve for all!

# ACTION VOLUNTEERS ...

- Help alleviate poverty
- Teach the illiterate
- Combat drug use
- Work to prevent crime
- Deter child abuse
- Assist refugees
- Supplement community social services
- Donate professional expertise
- Offer counsel to the troubled
- Inspire confidence
- Give strength and hope
- Share their time and their skills
- Provide hundreds of different types of volunteer service.

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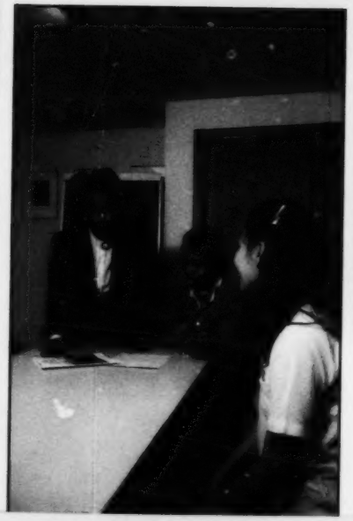

## ACTION, the national volunteer agency

ACTION's mission is to promote the spirit and practice of voluntarism. This mission is carried out by more than 380,000 local volunteers in communities around the country. The agency also helps countless other neighborhood volunteer activities and community projects by providing grants, technical assistance and a vast knowledge of volunteer resources, activities and programs.

As the primary federal volunteer organization, ACTION provides a wide variety of volunteer opportunities for people of every background and economic circumstance. It also acts as a link between the public and private sectors in forming partnerships for seeking fresh solutions to local problems.

ACTION fosters the traditional belief and willingness of Americans to help their fellow citizens in need. Whether the goal is to help adults learn to read, to help young people stay drug-free, or to provide companionship and services to the home-bound elderly, ACTION programs and volunteers show that our citizens can join together to address the needs of a community and its people.

Under President Reagan's leadership we are seeing a renaissance of voluntarism. He has encouraged the greatest build-up of community self-help and private sector initiatives ever seen in this country. ACTION is part of this effort, as we build upon the rich human spirit of neighbor helping neighbor, which is the cornerstone of our national strength.

Donna M. Alvarado
Director, ACTION

# ACTION

Created in 1971 as the center for federal volunteer programs, resources and initiatives, ACTION has evolved into an agency of diverse programs and departments.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| RSVP | provide volunteer opportunities for retired persons | retired persons 60 and over |
| SCP | link low-income older persons and adults with special needs | low-income 60 and over |
| YVA | community service opportunities for youth | students age 14-22 |
| VISTA | anti-poverty | persons over 18 |
| | | |
| ADPP | prevent use of drugs | parent, youth and community groups |
| OVI | provide community volunteer support | community volunteers |

# at a Glance

Getting to know ACTION means learning about the dynamism of many thousands of volunteers and a tremendous range of volunteer programs.

| | |
|---|---|
| part-time several hours per week | grant for project development and operation |
| part-time 20 hours per week, $2.20 per hour stipend | grant for project development and operation |
| part-time, suggested 10 hours per week | grant for project development and technical assistance |
| full-time 1-2 years | food and lodging, travel, medical insurance, stipend |
| [illegible] | [illegible] |
| varies | demonstration grants, technical assistance and information |
| varies | mini-grants and technical assistance |

## Older American Volunteer Programs

Through ACTION, older Americans show the tremendous contribution they can make to society. Across the country, men and women 60 and over are putting their experience and know-how to work as volunteers. ACTION provides them with special training to help them assist others.

Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions receive modest stipends, while Retired Senior Volunteers serve without compensation.

In every case, these older volunteers apply their knowledge, maturity and caring where they are most needed. By providing outlets for the volunteers' energy, creativity and love, the Older American Volunteer Programs offer opportunities for personal development and self-satisfaction that are unparalleled in the working world.

## Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)

Since 1965, Foster Grandparents and children with special or exceptional needs have formed a winning combination. Foster Grandparents are low-income seniors who attend to the physical, mental and emotional needs of disadvantaged children. They are "grandparents" in every sense; each volunteer is a caring, stable presence in a child's world.

Foster Grandparent volunteers work in schools for mentally retarded, disturbed and learning-disabled children; in Head Start programs; in juvenile detention centers; in boarding schools and foster care homes; and in some cases in a child's home. Oftentimes, the Foster Grandparents provide juvenile offenders and child abuse victims with their first positive adult relationship.

Foster Grandparents are key members of child-care teams at their assigned institutions, providing children with special attention that a busy staff often hasn't time to give. From tutoring deaf children by using sign language learned through the program, to

pushing wheelchair-bound children through intricate square-dance patterns, Foster Grandparents change young lives just by caring.

## Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

RSVP is ACTION's largest program. RSVP proves that retirement can be an opportunity to put the skills and experience of a lifetime to work for others.

Through non-profit organizations and local public agencies in more than one-fourth of the nation's counties, RSVP matches the interests and abilities of seniors with rewarding part-time opportunities for community service. Funding and technical assistance are provided by ACTION and the local community.

Launched in 1971, the program is a vital force shaping new roles, expectations and images for senior citizens.

RSVP volunteers respond to critical community needs by serving youth, fighting inflation, helping provide long-term care and preventing crime. The volunteers operate runaway-shelters, provide debt-counseling, organize widows' support groups, and offer occupational counseling for first-time offenders.

RSVP offers thousands of opportunities to retired citizens, tailored to their skills and schedules. Executives, housewives, teachers and engineers—all can serve. There are never too many volunteers. The professional experience and special skills of retired Americans are being put to work helping communities to meet the tough challenges of the future.

## Senior Companion Program (SCP)

Since 1974, low-income Senior Companions have been helping thousands of their more frail peers gain the confidence and positive mental attitude needed for successful independent living.

Most Senior Companions serve the homebound elderly—those needing daily help shopping, visiting

the doctor and managing finances. By relieving the loneliness and isolation of living at home, volunteers prevent many elderly from entering institutions. Senior Companions also help peers readjust to normal life following hospitalization, assist those facing terminal illness and offer security and appreciation to the mentally ill.

Senior Companions are staunch advocates of those they help. The volunteers' jobs quickly become a commitment, linking those in need to resources and benefits to which they are entitled.

## Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA)

Established in 1964, Volunteers In Service To America, VISTA, is the oldest program in ACTION. VISTA's goal is to alleviate poverty in America by helping low-income people improve the conditions of their lives.

Volunteers—about one-third of them low-income individuals—live and work among the poor, serving in urban and rural areas and on Indian reservations.

More than half of VISTA's programs are youth-oriented, addressing problems such as:

- illiteracy
- lack of job skills
- runaways
- drug use prevention
- child abuse

Other volunteers share their skills in:

- neighborhood revitalization
- economic resettlement
- food banks.

ACTION provides a basic subsistence allowance for housing, food and incidentals. Recently, emphasis has been on recruitment of unpaid volunteers and funding of projects with strong potential for being continued by the community after VISTA support ends.

## National Center for Service Learning (NCSL)

ACTION operates the National Center for Service Learning to increase the number of student volunteers in community affairs nationwide. The Center provides free training, resource materials and on-site consultation to high school, college and community staff personnel who direct, plan and develop student volunteer programs.

The Center does not determine local needs, fund programs or place volunteers. It assists people who run student volunteer projects, such as consumer counseling, companionship for the handicapped, tutoring, health and nutrition education for the elderly, crime prevention and neighborhood improvement.

The Center sponsors a variety of seminars and workshops for education and community agency staff who work in or wish to develop service-learning programs.

## Young Volunteers in Action (YVA)

Developed in 1981, Young Volunteers in Action gives students, age 14 to 22, a chance to get involved in their communities while exploring career interests. Volunteers shoulder responsibilities, develop leadership skills and gain experience that gives them an edge in competing for jobs and school placement. They also develop civic pride and a sense of personal achievement.

Young volunteers participate in a range of projects and activities, including tutoring homebound students, serving in parks and recreation centers, helping weatherize homes, assisting in hospitals, fighting drug and alcohol abuse and aiding disaster relief efforts. Some volunteer for short-term projects, and all are encouraged to volunteer at least eight hours a month. Many are given academic credit for their work.

Sponsors for Young Volunteers in Action include

federal, state and local agencies and private non-profit organizations. Local civic groups and government representatives often serve on the board of directors for local projects—a critical point for generating local resources to continue the program after the small, two-year ACTION grant expires.

## ACTION Drug Prevention Program (ADPP)

ACTION has been given a primary responsibility by The White House for carrying out the federal drug abuse prevention effort through its Drug Prevention Program. This program sponsors drug use education and prevention efforts and brings together organizations and individuals to support volunteers fighting drug use among American youth.

On the local, state and national levels, ACTION encourages and helps fund the growth of youth, parents, and senior citizen groups and networks committed to helping young people remain drug free. ACTION disseminates accurate, up-to-date information on the health effects of drugs and various prevention methods.

By involving corporate and business leaders and notable public figures in education and awareness efforts, the program helps expose drug misinformation that glamorizes the use of illegal drugs. Such activities spark involvement of youth volunteer programs across the country, which may lead to a major anti-drug movement among youth.

## Office of Voluntarism Initiatives (OVI)

The Office of Voluntarism Initiatives is crucial to the development and outreach of ACTION's efforts to stimulate and support voluntary action in the public and private sectors. The office administers programs that improve the delivery of services affecting the physical and economic well-being of needy people through non-stipend volunteer programs.

OVI also provides links at national, state and local

levels among public and private organizations to encourage increased volunteer activity in solving social problems. OVI programs include:

**GRANTS PROGRAMS**

The Volunteer Demonstration Program provides one-year grants to private, non-profit community organizations to test new and innovative program models that, when successful, can be replicated. These programs could form the basis of ACTION initiatives or may be adopted by the private sector, including voluntary associations, churches, corporations, or by state or local governments. Recent grants were targeted for projects in drug abuse prevention, literacy, runaway youth and neighborhood initiatives.

The State Office of Voluntarism Program stimulates new statewide citizen initiatives, and promotes and coordinates voluntarism through the creation of gubernatorial-level "S/OVP" offices. ACTION provides developmental funding and resource information exchange among the offices, and sponsors a yearly S/OVP conference.

The Technical Assistance Program (TAP) grants are awarded to non-profit organizations for improving management or training volunteers. TAP grants are used across the country to produce self-help manuals, workshop curricula, training tapes and how-to booklets.

ACTION Mini-Grants are non-renewable money grants awarded to strengthen or initiate volunteer projects and to enhance volunteer activities that show potential for providing long-term solutions to community problems.

**NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK**

Each spring, the President sets aside a week for the special recognition of volunteers and their achievements. OVI promotes National Volunteer Week among federal agencies, state and local governments and private organizations that use volunteers nationwide. Additionally, through OVI, ACTION co-sponsors, in conjunction with VOLUNTEER, a private, non-profit organization, the

annual President's Volunteer Action awards. The President created the awards program in 1982 to call attention to what can be accomplished through voluntary action. Funding for the awards comes from private foundations and corporations.

**PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

OVI is also the office that develops alternatives to government-sponsored programs by involving the private sector in more partnership arrangements with community services. Programs come from private foundations and corporations.

In encouraging a greater private sector role in voluntarism, ACTION recently sponsored two regional conferences (Atlanta and San Francisco) on voluntarism, attended by representatives from such corporations as Levi Strauss, Coca Cola and McKesson — organizations that demonstrated a strong interest in volunteer programs in their communities. OVI also provides support to the Federal Interagency Group of Voluntarism in its efforts to encourage voluntary activities among federal employees in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. In keeping with President Reagan's call for greater private sector involvement, ACTION will continue to seek out public/private partnerships as a viable and realistic response to human need.

# ACTION REGIONAL OFFICES

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Region II includes:

New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands

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Philadelphia, PA 19106

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Region III includes:

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Region V includes:

Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin

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